

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) 1. A sack for compressing compressible material contained therein, the sack including:

a pliable body portion for receiving the material, the body portion having a lower base portion, a wall means and an upper opening for introducing the material into the sack and removing it therefrom;

a cover means exterior to the body portion and fixed thereto proximate the opening and having a cover fastening means fastener for releasably fastening to the body portion proximate the base whereby the cover means covers the opening, ~~and~~

a plurality of compression straps and/or and connectors exterior to the body portion and attached thereto, the cover fastener and compression straps being operable to compress material in the body portion;

~~wherein the cover fastening means and the plurality of straps and/or connectors are operable to compress material in the body portion.~~

a pair of shoulder straps, separate from the compression straps, connected to the wall; and

a panel member juxtaposing the wall and attached thereto to constitute a sleeve on the sack, whereby the sleeve is adapted to optionally stow the shoulder straps between the wall and the panel member;

wherein the sack is configurable to form a backpack when the pair of shoulder straps are not stowed between the wall and the panel member.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A sack as claimed in claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein the upper portion of the wall ~~means~~ constitutes the opening and includes a drawstring for the opening.

4. (Currently Amended) A sack as claimed in claim 3, wherein the body portion

is shaped to be substantially cylindrical when full and the cover ~~means~~ is cap-like and adapted to cover and extend below the opening when the cover ~~fastening means~~ fastener is fastened to the body portion.

5. (Currently Amended) A sack as claimed in claim 4, ~~and including a~~ wherein the panel member is porous and pliable ~~panel member between the shoulder straps juxtaposing the wall means and attached thereto to constitute a sleeve on the back of the back pack, whereby when used as a backpack the panel~~ and constitutes a breathable barrier between the user's back and the ~~backpack sack, with~~ the sleeve being adapted to optionally stow a stiffening member ~~and/or or~~ hydration bladder; ~~and when not used as a backpack the sleeve is adapted to optionally stow the shoulder straps.~~

6. (Currently Amended) A backpack including:

a pliable body portion having a lower base portion, a wall ~~means~~ and an upper opening for introducing material into the backpack and removing it therefrom;

a cover ~~means~~ exterior to the body portion and fixed thereto proximate the opening and having a cover ~~fastening means~~ fastener for releasably fastening to the body portion proximate the base whereby the cover ~~means~~ covers the opening;

a plurality of compression straps ~~and/or and~~ connectors exterior to the body portion and attached thereto, ~~and~~

a pair of shoulder straps, separate from the compression straps, fixed to the body portion proximate the opening, the shoulder straps ~~cooperating in use with at least one of the plurality of straps and/or connectors and~~ being stowable when not in use; and

a panel member juxtaposing the wall and attached thereto to constitute a sleeve on the back of the sack, the sleeve adapted to optionally stow the shoulder straps between the wall and the panel member;

wherein the cover ~~fastening means~~ fastener and the plurality of compression straps ~~and/or and~~ connectors are operable to compress compressible material in the body portion.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (New) A backpack as claimed in claim 6, wherein the panel member is porous and pliable and constitutes a breathable barrier between the user's back and the backpack, the sleeve being adapted to optionally stow a stiffening member or hydration bladder.